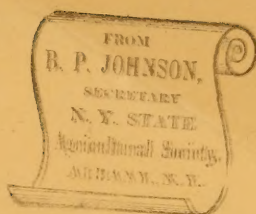


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# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

*N. Y. State Agricultural Society,*

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,

ALBANY, FEBRUARY 12, 1863,

By Hon. E. CORNELL.

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# ADDRESS

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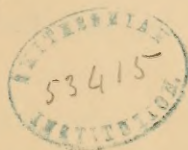
ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

## N. Y. STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,

ALBANY, FEBRUARY 12, 1863,

By EZRA CORNELL, PRESIDENT.



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## ADDRESS.

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GENTLEMEN OF THE NEW YORK STATE AGRICULTURAL  
SOCIETY :

This meeting marks the close of the past and the commencement of a new year with our Society. The year that has passed has been the most eventful of any in the history of our country—remarkable alike for the devastating ravages of war, in the Southern section of our Union, and the extraordinary prosperity and rich reward of agricultural pursuits in the Northern and Western sections of the same Union. The State of New York, under the blessing of a kind Providence, has never perhaps enjoyed a higher degree of prosperity than during the year which has just closed.

The labors of the husbandman have been rewarded with abundant harvests, and with a ready and satisfactory market for his products; he has also been exempt, in a remarkable degree, from pestilential visitations, from unseasonable and

unpropitious weather, and from the ravages of noxious insects.

The heavy drafts upon our farm laborers, caused by the necessities of the Government, to meet and suppress a wicked and gigantic rebellion, waged by the slave power for its overthrow, was promptly responded to by volunteers from the free and brave sons of our farmers, who, like Cincinnatus, left the plow in the furrow and rushed to the defence of their country and its free institutions, leaving the work at home to be performed by the reserve corps of the farm, aided by the increased application of the mechanical devices which the inventive talent of our people is annually placing at the disposal of the farmer as a substitute for manual labor. These sources have been ample, all the requirements of agriculture have been supplied, and the condition of the farms of the State, it is believed, was never better at the commencement of a new season than at present for the reception of seeds for the spring crops.

The advantages that have enabled the great agricultural interest of the State to sustain itself so triumphantly, perform all the labors and duties requisite for the growth, gathering and marketing



of a crop exceeding the full average of the production of the State, during a season when more than one hundred thousand laborers have been drawn from the tillage of the soil to the destructive pursuits of war, is the result, mainly, of the operations of the New York State Agricultural Society in encouraging every invention and every improvement which tends to lessen manual labor on the farm, and render more efficient such as are indispensable in the pursuits of agriculture.

At the period when the Society was organized, the plow and the harrow were the only implements in general use upon the farm which had been brought to a tolerable state of efficiency, or that have retained a place among the farm implements of the present day, and these have, since that period, been so improved as to perform better work with a diminished outlay of power. It was then customary to expend from four to six days of manual labor in hoeing an acre of corn. Now, one day, with a horse-hoe, or an improved cultivator, is adequate to the tillage of an acre so perfectly, without the intervention of the hand-hoe, that the average production per acre is fully sustained. The mowing-machine, horse-rake and horse-pitchfork, have so completely robbed the

hay-field of the terrors of severe labor that the aged and infirm members of the household can supply the necessary demand, and cut as much grass in one day with the machine as ten of the most stalwart men could cut with the scythe in the same time, while the housing of the hay is alike facilitated by the use of the other implements. The reaper is working a like revolution in our fields of grain. Without the use of this machine, thousands of acres of wheat would have remained unharvested during the past summer in the grain-growing regions of the West.

And so we might canvass the whole field of farm labor, and we should find a ready helper at hand, in the form of some machine or improved implement, in every department. Even in some of our largest dairies, machinery has taken the place of the milk-maid. In one instance which has come to my knowledge, three persons, with the aid of the "Yankee cow-milker," as the machine was termed at the great Exhibition in London, perform the milking in a dairy which required the labor of twenty persons before the machine was introduced. The proprietor assured me that the cows were milked more satisfactorily now than formerly, and would remain in milk

longer with the use of the machine than they did when the milking was performed by hand.

Much of this improvement and many of these new inventions may be traced to suggestions or encouragements held out by this Society, or to ideas or thoughts which were quickened into active inquiry and directed to inventive channels by visits to our Annual Fairs, or occasional implement trials. By the opportunity thus afforded for the farmer and the mechanic to meet together annually, where they can cultivate each others acquaintance, examine each others productions, learn each others wants, interchange with each other views as to the defects of this machine and the improvements applicable to that, where dormant ideas are quickened into life by chance suggestions, which result in the invention of a new machine or the improvement of an old one, the State of New York has received benefits, the value of which are as a thousand to one to all the pecuniary aid the Society has drawn from the Treasury of the State.

The vast benefits derived from this organization, in the manner above suggested, are by no means the only ones resulting from it. Every branch of production upon the farm is stimulated by it. The farmer sees something at the Fair

that he had not seen before. He hears something that is new to him. He revolves the matter over in his mind, as he returns to his own quiet home, and comes to the conclusion that he will try the experiment. The trial is made, it proves a success, and he wonders that he had never thought of it before.

The evening discussions held during our Fairs are important in this point of view, and are very deservedly increasing in popularity. Farmers attending them listen to the discussion of subjects, in which they are directly interested and of which they know much, by practical men like themselves, and it is hardly possible that they should fail to give birth to new ideas, stimulate profitable reflection, and ripen into some improvements.

Our organization, however beneficial it has been to the great farming interests of the State, however valuable it has proved to the manufacturing and mechanical industry of our people, however convenient as a channel through which the science and knowledge of agriculture is collected and disseminated throughout the world, is still far from being perfect—far short of what it should be or what is practicable. The organization of the Society should be so perfected as to secure active



representation and co-operation in every county of the State, that every town should feel and recognize the influence of its usefulness, and every school district should know that it was recognized by the State Society as a component part of the great industrial hive of the Empire State, whose interests it was the duty and pleasure of the Society to watch over and to promote.

Details for the improvement of our organization would be out of place here, but the subject should occupy the earnest attention of the officers and friends of the Society and of the agriculturists of the State. Our State and County Societies, imperfect as they are, have earned a much higher appreciation than they have yet received by the Legislative authorities of the State, representing as they do the most important branch of industry in the State, and by which the millions of our people are fed.

The amount of capital invested in agricultural pursuits and the annual products of the same in the State of New York, as exhibited by the census of 1860, and the increase of the same during the preceding ten years, are as follows: Cash value of farms, \$803,343,393, an increase over the like estimated value in 1850 of \$248,796,751. Value

of farm implements, \$29,166,565, an increase in ten years of \$7,081,639. Value of farm stock, such as horses, cattle, sheep, swine, and other animals, \$82,293,917, increase in ten years \$2,946,407. Making a total capital invested of \$914,803,875, and an aggregate increase in ten years of \$258,824,797. Annual products, embracing grain, hay and field crops of all kinds, \$67,072,011, an increase over the same class of crops in 1850 of \$7,076,548. Value of animal products, such as cattle slaughtered, wool, butter and cheese, \$38,025,698, increase in ten years, \$6,588,598. Value of orchard products, beeswax, honey, maple sugar and domestic manufactures, \$5,876,968, increase in ten years, \$1,623,354. Making a total of annual products of \$110,974,677, against \$96,786,177 in 1850, an aggregate increase of \$14,188,500.

This sum of total products, \$110,974,677, embraces the cost of farm labor, an item, the actual amount of which, we have no census data to determine, but we can approximate to the amount by assuming that it equals the usual proportion allowed by the landlord to the tenant on leased farms, where the tenant furnishes only the labor, which proportion as far as my knowledge extends is one-third. Applying this rule to the case, we

have the sum of \$36,991,559, as the cost of labor on all the farms of this State in 1860, and the sum of \$32,262,059 for 1850. These labor sums deducted from the value of the year's gross production, gives us \$73,983,118 in 1860, and \$64,524,118 in 1850, as the earnings of the capital invested in farming in this State, or a trifle over 8 per cent. for 1860, and nearly 10 per cent. for 1850. This calculation, however, is based upon a valuation of about \$29 per acre for all the lands in the State, which were returned in the census of 1850, and a valuation of \$38.25 per acre in 1860. If we estimate the lands at the actual valuation of 1860, we find a profit of seven and a half per cent. in 1850, and a trifle over eight per cent. profit in 1860.

This result shows an increase in the value of our farms, and a corresponding increase in the estimated capital invested, an increasing ratio of production, and a satisfactory per centage of profit upon the increased aggregate capital.

Here the best data at our command, gives a blunt contradiction to two of the errors that have taken possession of the minds of many people, in regard to agricultural pursuits in this State. First, that the soil is undergoing a gradual but sure pro-

cess of deterioration, or diminution of its power to produce continued crops, and second, that farming, though very useful in supplying food, is unproductive of profit, and hence not desirable as a source of investment.

These very satisfactory results, which are shown by the figures of the census, are in no small degree the direct and legitimate fruits of our Agricultural Societies, and attest the wisdom of the Legislature, in its venture of a very small encouragement in appropriations to those Societies. And it may not be out of place here, to lay before the farmers of the State, as nearly as may be, the amount and kind of encouragement, they have received at the hands of their Government, which is as follows. Since 1841, the Legislature has annually appropriated \$8,000, to be divided between the State and County Societies as follows. To the State Society \$700, and the balance to the County Societies, proportionate to the population of their respective counties. Of this sum, about one-third remains in the treasury of the State, as the proportion assigned to counties that have no Societies, or that have not complied with the terms of the appropriation, that a like amount should be raised by the Society by subscription or



otherwise, and their proceedings reported annually to the Secretary of State.

In 1848, 1849, and 1850, an appropriation of \$600 the first, and \$1,000 each for the other two years, was made, for the old State Hall, one-third of which was used by the State Agricultural Society, and the balance by the Regents of the University, for their Geological Museum. In 1850, and 1851, an appropriation of \$100 each year, for the Museum of the Society. This was the commencement of that valuable collection of curiosities pertaining to agriculture, which is now looked upon with so much satisfaction by every farmer who visits the capital of his State. In each of the years of 1851, '52, and '53, \$800 was appropriated for the expenses of the old State Hall, and in each of the years 1854, '55, '56, and '57, \$1,000 was appropriated for the same purpose, one-third of which is properly chargeable to this Society. In 1857, an appropriation of \$40,000 was made for building the new hall, one-third of which was assigned to the use of the State Agricultural Society, and two-thirds to the Geological Department of the Regents of the University, and \$4,500 for fitting up the rooms assigned to the use of the Society.

In 1857, '58, '59, '60, 61, and 62, \$2,000 was appropriated each year for expenses of new hall, one-third of which is chargeable to the Society. There has also been appropriated, \$9,000 for the entomological researches conducted by Dr. FITCH during the past nine years.

The printing of the Transactions of the Society, a volume which is recognized at home and abroad as the most valuable practicable treatise on agriculture, is done at the expense of the State, as one of its Legislative documents, and is thus embraced in the general printing expenses of the State, and I am unable to separate it therefrom, so as to determine its cost.

Thus it appears that, aside from printing the annual Legislative Report on Agriculture, the whole amount appropriated by the great State of New York, for all purposes, in aid of its greatest and most vital interest, during a period of twenty-two years, is only \$160,112, or the paltry sum of \$7,278 per annum. Surely the farmers of the Empire State have not been the "*sturdy beggars*" who have besieged the Treasury of the State from year to year.

Notwithstanding the satisfactory statements by which we are able to show the healthy and prosper-

ous condition of agricultural pursuits, there are large fields of improvement open to the enterprise of the farmer, some of which I desire to refer to at this time.

My attention has been directed to our present system of fencing, and the enormous outlay of capital it requires annually to support it, and hence the question, have we been governed by correct principles in the inclosure of our fields? or have we been drifting along on the tide of apparent necessity, without reference to principle?

In England, the Agricultural Societies are offering premiums to those who will eradicate the greatest amount of hedge fence during the year. Some of the tenant farmers insist upon a stipulation in their leases authorizing them to reclaim the lands occupied by the hedges, thus adding to the productive area of the farm, and lessening the annual outlay for supporting the fence. I have heard of one such farmer who had thus added forty-five acres to the tillable land of his farm within a few years.

On the Continent of Europe there are no fences, or at least so few that they are an exception to the rule. The traveler will pass hundreds of miles without seeing a fence of any kind, or even

noticing any land marks dividing farms, and no encouragement is offered there by Agricultural Societies for inclosing farms with fences.

May it not then be fairly questioned whether we are not pursuing the practice of fencing our farms into small fields, at a large annual expense, greatly to our own disadvantage? With a view of inducing our farmers to reflect upon this subject, I submit the following estimates of the cost of fences.

To fence a farm into square fields of two and a half acres each, crediting half of the fence to the adjoining field, requires forty rods of fence, or sixteen rods per acre, which, at \$15 per thousand for rails, and \$10 per thousand for stakes, will cost at least thirty cents per rod, or \$4.80 per acre, and entail an annual expense in the interest of money, natural decay of material, and labor for repairs, of nearly or quite one dollar per acre. Fields of five acres each require eleven and a half rods per acre, costing \$3.45 per acre. Ten acre fields require eight rods of fence per acre, costing \$2.40 per acre. Twenty acre fields reduce the fence to five and a half rods per acre, at a cost of \$1.65 per acre. Forty acres in a field require but four rods per acre, costing only \$1.20



per acre ; and one hundred acres may be inclosed in one field with two and a half rods per acre, costing 75 cents per acre.

Small farms are quite generally fenced into fields of five acres each, and large farms are regarded as satisfactorily divided if the fields measure fifteen or twenty acres each. Assuming ten acres as the average size of fields into which our farms are divided by fences, we arrive at the following result as to the cost of fencing.

A farm of 100 acres thus divided would require 800 rods of fence, which, of rails and stakes, would cost \$240, to which must be added ten per cent. for annual decay and repairs, and seven per cent. for the use of capital invested in the fence, making \$40.80 per annum. This fence will occupy a strip of land at least four feet wide, and of the length of 800 rods, will make twelve and a half acres, costing say \$30 per acre, which we will assume to be the average value of the farming lands of the State, making the sum of \$375, the annual interest of which is \$26.25, to be charged to the annual fence account, swelling it to \$67.05, as the annual cost of sustaining the cheapest class of fence on a farm of one hundred acres.

To the above might properly be added a con-

siderable sum as damages sustained annually from the rank growth of noxious weeds, which find shelter in the fence corners, and ripen a luxuriant crop of seeds to dispute the possession of the adjoining fields, on each return of spring, with the seeds upon which the farmer relies for his crop, increasing the expense of cultivation, and diminishing the productiveness of the soil.

The sum representing the cost of the fence and interest on the value of land occupied by it, multiplied by the 120,469 farms of 100 acres each, that the improved lands of the State of New York would make if thus divided, represents the vast sum of \$7,830,485, as the annual cost of fences in this State. The above estimate is based upon the cost of a cheap rail fence. The cheapest fence I can build on my own farm is of hemlock boards and chestnut posts, costing me one dollar per rod. It is therefore apparent to my mind that the average cost of fencing is much above the figures that I have given, and may safely be assumed to cost \$10,000,000 per annum. As an equivalent for this vast annual outlay of money, we enjoy the privilege of turning our cattle out to harvest their own living, by grazing the pastures and gleaning the stubble fields, or running at large in the public highway. Is it a good investment?

Do we get a fair and full equivalent for the investment of \$150,000,000, for such it really is, as the \$10,000,000 which we annually pay to sustain our fences, with our farms as collaterals, would secure the use of that sum by loan? I think we do not; and I desire that our farmers should begin to reflect on this subject, and see if it is not time to commence a reform in that direction.

By confining cattle to the barn-yard or small inclosures, and feeding them in stalls, the necessity for interior fences on the farm would be removed. That this mode of keeping cattle is not only practicable, but highly beneficial to the interest of the farmer, is fully demonstrated by numerous and repeated experiments, made upon both a large and small scale in Europe and America, some of which I will briefly refer to.

The Hon. JOSIAH QUINCY, of Massachusetts, in an able essay on the soiling of cattle, says: "Satisfied in my own mind of the beneficial effects of the practice, I adopted it in the year 1814, and adhered to it until the year 1822, keeping from *fifteen to twenty* head of milch cows, with satisfactory success." In 1822, Mr. QUINCY left his farm, and did not resume its management until 1847, when he again commenced the practice of soiling. Of this second experiment he says: "Resuming

its management in 1847, I immediately returned to the practice of soiling, resorting to the essays I had formerly published, to revive my knowledge on the subject, and from that time to the present, 1857, have persevered in the practice, with such entire satisfaction, that no consideration would induce me to adopt any other. Since 1847, I have kept from thirty to thirty-five head of cows in this way, so that, in my mind, my experience is conclusive on the subject."

Of the advantages resulting from "soiling," Mr. QUINCY says: "1st. It saves land. 2d. It saves fencing. 3d. It economized food. 4th. It kept the cattle in better condition and greater comfort. 5th. It produced more milk. 6th. It increased immensely the quantity and quality of the manure." As to saving land, Mr. QUINCY says: "*One* acre soiled from will produce as much as *three* acres pastured. This is enough, although some European writers assert the benefit is equal to *one* in *seven*, this great difference arising from the mode in which the one acre is cultivated and enriched for succulent products." On the subject of health he says: "A popular objection to this mode of keeping milch cows is, that want of exercise must affect injuriously the health of the animal. To this, European writers, some of whom have



kept in this way large herds, reply that they 'never had one sick, or one die, or one miscarry,' in consequence of this mode of keeping. After more than ten years' experience of the same practice, my experience justifies me in uniting my testimony to theirs on this point."

As to what class of farmers can adopt soiling successfully, he says: "The system I advocate has reference to *arable land, to that portion of it on every man's farm, which is capable of being plowed and mowed over.*" Again: "I answer *every farmer who wants manure at a cheap and easy rate*, the greatest profit of soiling arises from the quantity of manure it enables the farmer to make, more than doubling it upon the same stock."

I could introduce hundreds of pages of testimony of like high character to prove that it is not only practicable, but highly advantageous to confine cattle to stalls or small inclosures, and carry their food to them, in preference to allowing them to roam over pastures in pursuit of their food, but it seems to me uncalled for. The testimony of Mr. QUINCY is that of a practical man, who after long years of experience in practicing the system, finds no drawbacks to discourage him, and affirms most fully the testimony of many

others, who have published the result of their successful experience in the same system.

In closing this subject, I would remark that I do not urge an indiscriminate destruction of fences, or a rash and imperfect adoption of the practice of soiling cattle. What I advise is, that farmers should reflect upon this subject, and wisely prepare themselves for a change that must come sooner or later. I have commenced by doubling the size of my fields, lessening the quantity of inside or division fences, and strengthening the character of outside fences, assuming that those will be the last we shall dispense with.

The improvement of farm stock is a subject deserving more of our attention than it is receiving. It is true that by comparing the present with the past, we can show a marked improvement, and trace much of our present prosperity to that cause; but we cannot claim our improvement to be the result of any system, and I think it is fair to assume that our ratio of improvement is far below what might be expected from the facilities we have at command. I shall not complain that our farmers do not purchase thoroughbred animals of the improved breeds at high prices, for the purpose of stocking their farms; I think they are wise in not doing so; I know

they cannot afford it; I also know that they cannot afford to neglect the improvement of their farm stock. How then can they best do it? I answer by a systematic use of carefully selected thorough-bred males, from the improved breeds, best adapted to the localities and purposes for which the animals are kept. The practice, too common among those of our farmers who attempt improvement, is to seek one cross with a thorough-bred male, and then resort to the use of the half-bred offspring. This is back-sliding. The get of the half-bred male, will, as a rule, possess less merit than he does himself, and hence time is passing with a diminished ratio of improvement.

Let our farmers adopt as a rule the practice of using thorough-bred male animals, and discard all others, in breeding stock for the dairy or shambles, and the following would be the result in ten years, allowing the females to come in at two years of age. The produce of 1865 would be half-blood. Those of 1867 would possess three-fourths of the improved blood. Those of 1869 would be seven-eighths, and at the expiration of ten years the alloy or common blood would be reduced to one thirty-second part of that represented in the animal, and for all practicable purposes, except breeding, the produce of the fifth and sixth generation,

and beyond, would rank in value with the improved breed.

The facilities for such improvement we have at hand, in reasonable abundance and great excellence. Our herds of the improved breeds represent the most noted tribes of the English herds; and the recent bold and praiseworthy experiment of our friend, SAMUEL THORNE, Esq., of Dutchess county, of sending his young bulls back to England for a market, has given us an opportunity to compare American bred with English Short Horns, and demonstrate to our English friends that their improved breeds do not deteriorate on American soil. Not only the Short Horns, but the Devons, the Herefords, the Ayrshires, and other breeds of undoubted purity of blood, and great excellence of quality, are to be found within the limits of our own State, at prices which should not be regarded as a bar to their general use.

I would suggest to the County Agricultural Societies that they could do much to stimulate this desired improvement by encouraging system in the selection of breeding animals, and the establishment of a record or herd book under the control of the Society for the entry of grade animals.

To impress the question of improvements of



our stock more fully upon the minds of our farmers, I will allude to a few facts in our dairy statistics, and I will select those of Tompkins county, being more familiar with the improvements of that county. The census returns of 1845, for that county, give an average of 102 lbs. of butter for each cow. For 1850, the average was 109 lbs. For 1855, it was 113 lbs., and the census returns of 1860, which really give the result of 1859, when our pastures were injured by severe drouth, and large quantities of grasshoppers, give the average at 117 lbs. The statistics of that county, representing the crops of 1860, show the average to be 128 lbs. That year the pastures were abundant and the dairy crop a full average. In 1850, Tompkins county stood three pounds per cow below the average of the State, and in 1860 she stands four pounds above the average of the State by the census returns, and fifteen pounds above by the privately obtained statistics. Several entire daries averaged 200 lbs. to the cow. One entire school district averaged 165 lbs., and three of the towns averaged respectively 131, 132, and 143 lbs. per cow. It is therefore safe to assume that the cows of Tompkins county, at the present time will supply milk that will make 25 lbs. more

butter per head, than would the cows of 1845, thereby increasing the butter crop of the county \$55,537 per annum, there being 14,810 cows, and the butter computed at fifteen cents per pound.

This improvement commenced in 1842, by the introduction of thorough-bred Short Horn bulls. The improvement has not however been as great as it might have been, and I am confident if properly pressed it may be carried to an average of 200 lbs. of butter per cow, for the county, and for all the best dairy counties of the State. If I am right, and I believe that I am, then the farmers of my county have the means within reach, of increasing the annual value of their butter crop \$150,000 above what it now is, with little or no increase in the cost of keeping their cows, as a poor cow consumes as much food as a good one. A like improvement for the whole State would produce the sum of \$11,798,157 per annum.

There is a like pressing need for the improvement of our sheep, and it is readily attained by the same means, the judicious selection of male animals for breeding purposes. I know of instances where one pound of wool per head on an average through a flock of lambs, above what their dams produced, has been the result of the

first cross of a good ram upon a flock of fine wool ewes. Such results are being produced here and there, all over the State where sheep are kept, and still, the facts are not generally known, or at least are not so impressed upon the minds of the flock-masters of the neighborhood, as to lead to prompt and decided improvements.

The census of 1860 shows the number of sheep in our State, to be 2,657,855, which produced a clip of 9,454,473 lbs. of wool, or an average of about 3 lbs. 12 ounces per head. It is probable that there are now, as many as 3,000,000 in the State, and I believe it is within our power at a very small cost, to bring the average product of wool up to 5 lbs. 10 ounces, without any increase in the consumption of food. I make this statement upon my knowledge of flocks of Spanish Merino sheep, having an average weight of carcass after shearing of 75 lbs., which produce 5 lbs. and 12 ounces of clean brook-washed wool, without grain or extra keep in any form, and it is the general calculation that sheep will consume food in proportion to their weight, and I believe 75 lbs. is below the average weight of carcass, of such of our sheep as are kept mainly for the production of wool. Hence I regard it safe, to assume that the consumption of food by the sheep of the State is


as great as would be necessary, if the flocks were so improved in quality as to produce an increased average of two pounds of wool per head. Such an improvement would add 6,000,000 pounds to our annual clip of wool, and \$3,000,000 annually to our available means.

It appears then, that the farmers of our State are reaping \$15,000,000 per annum *less reward*, than they might do from their dairies and their flocks. Will not such facts arrest their attention, and lead more directly to the desired improvement? What richer field can our County Societies desire to labor in? And what higher emulation can they seek, than to strive to see which shall be the first to bring their county up to the indicated standard of improvement? It appears to me to be the highest duty that a County Agricultural Society owes to the community which sustains it, to study well the condition of the agricultural interest of its county, and ascertain wherein it can be most advantageously improved, and encourage such improvements, by all the means in its power, and to this end, more thorough organization is desirable. There should be no jealousy between county and town Societies, and there will not be, when such Societies are organized strictly for the promotion of agriculture



and horticulture instead of some local *village-culture*. I should rejoice to see an agricultural organization in every school district of the State, they to be represented in their Town Societies, and at their Town Fairs. The Town Societies should compete with each other at the exhibitions of the County Society, and the County Societies in like manner contend for honors before the State Society. With our organizations so perfected that the State Society, through the proper organs of county, town, and school district organizations, could reach every farmer's fireside, vast benefits would be derived by our agricultural interests which are now lost.

Before closing, I desire to say a word on the subject of education. It cannot be denied that we yet have many farmers who adhere to the old error that a boy requires a better education if he is to leave the farm and seek a living in the other professions, than is necessary if he is to continue on the farm. This is a great and mischievous error. It is placing the young farmer at a disadvantage at every step through life. He can no more rank at the head of his profession as a farmer, without education, than he could take such rank in the profession of law or of medicine while laboring under the like embarrassment. It is this error



which has sent the brightest and best educated of our farmers' sons from the farm, to seek employment in other pursuits of life, and retain at home those who have less mental culture and intellectual power, as good enough to do the drudgery of the farm, until the other professions have robbed the farm of many of its brightest ornaments.

This should no longer continue. It is high time that the agricultural interest asserted its rights in this matter. The nation recognizes the necessity for a higher standard of education for farmers, and has generously provided for it. The parents of those who are to become farmers must recognize the same necessity, and husband well the resources which the nation places at their disposal, attesting the wisdom of Congress in the annual improvement of the farmer and the farm, and the higher elevation of the agricultural profession.

The act of the last session of Congress, donating public lands to the several States and Territories which may provide colleges for the benefit of agricultural and mechanic arts, provides a quantity equal to 30,000 acres to each Senator and Representative in Congress to which the States are entitled by the apportionment under the census of 1860. New York, having thirty-three Senators and Representatives, is therefore entitled to 990,-

000 acres of land, which, if sold at the established Government price of one dollar and a quarter per acre, will create a fund of \$1,237,500, which the State is bound by the act to protect and keep good as a perpetual fund, which "shall be invested in stocks of the United States, or of the State, or some other safe stocks, yielding not less than five per centum on the par value of said stocks." This will produce an annual income of \$61,875, to be applied "to the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college, where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts," which, if faithfully administered, will do much to place the agricultural student on a level with those of other professions. This is a high trust confided by the nation to the farmers and mechanics of our country, and they must see to it, that it is not diverted from its proper channel, nor impaired in its usefulness by subdivisions among weak and inefficient institutions.

It is a proper and legitimate duty of this Society to foster the cause of agricultural and mechanical education, and watch with jealous care the appropriation of this National College fund, to the end

that it is not perverted from the lofty purposes for which it was set apart by Congress.

In drawing my official labors, as the President of your Society, to a close, I feel it incumbent upon me to express my sincere thanks to my immediate predecessor, the Hon. GEORGE GEDDES, and to the gentlemen of the Executive Committee, for their efficient support and co-operation in conducting the affairs of the Society, and carrying it successfully through the past year, and especially during my absence from the country.

I am under like obligation and embrace the present occasion to tender my thanks to the Board of Managers of the Monroe County Agricultural Society, the Common Council of the city of Rochester, and many of the distinguished citizens of Rochester, for their generous and efficient aid in making preparations for and in conducting our last Annual Fair to a successful issue.

Regretting that it has not been in my power to render more valuable services to the Society during the past year, and pledging my future co-operation in whatever may tend to advance the interests of the Society and the cause it has at heart, I turn with satisfaction to the performance of my last official duty, the introduction of my successor, Mr. EDWARD G. FAILE.







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